

When “Immediate” Isn’t Clear

*Mapping Publisher Responses to the
2025 NIH Public Access Policy*



Karen Gutzman (presenting), Pamela Shaw, Emma Wilson
Galter Health Sciences Library
Feinberg School of Medicine
Northwestern University



Jason Burton
UCLA Louise M. Darling Biomedical Library
and Science & Engineering Library



Daniel Burgard
University of North Texas Health Science Center

IMMEDIATE

Immediate?

Immediate after embargo?

Immediate with APC?

Immediate if hybrid?



The Real Question Wasn't NIH Policy

It was publisher interpretation.



Can I still publish here?



Do I need to pay open access fees?



Will the publisher submit to NIHMS?



Can I deposit my accepted manuscript myself?



What We Found

Variation in publisher responses.



Some publishers
clearly permitted
immediate AAM
deposit



Some responses
were journal-specific
or unclear



Some pathways
emphasized paid
open access
options



Policies and
language changed
over time



**The challenge was not just access to information—
it was interpretability.**



Building a Shared Resource

An evolving collaborative approach to publisher guidance

1



Identify common
hybrid journals used
by NIH-funded authors

2



Send structured
Request for
Information

3



Track responses in
shared spreadsheet

Public tracking resource



bit.ly/PublisherResponseTracking

4



Summarize
practical guidance

Integrated into local
NIH guidance



bit.ly/GreenZeroOAPublishers

5



Share openly
for reuse

Expanded through
AAHSL collaboration
and MLA outreach



Collaborative support through
AAHSL Scholarly Communication Committee



Northwestern
Feinberg School of Medicine

Medical Library Association Annual Meeting

Milwaukee, WI

May 19–22, 2026



Where Do We Go From Here?

Building sustainable shared infrastructure for NIH public access guidance



Faster researcher support

Get timely, accurate answers so researchers can move forward.



Reduced duplicated effort across institutions

Share what we learn so no one has to start from scratch.



Shared interpretation of evolving publisher policies

Together we clarify complex and changing policies.



Lower compliance uncertainty

Stronger, consistent guidance reduces risk for all.



Community-maintained guidance resources

Sustainable, openly shared, and continuously improved.



Who else can help sustain and maintain shared publisher guidance?

Seeking collaborators, organizations, and community partners interested in shared stewardship.

AAHSL

MLA

MEDICAL LIBRARY
ASSOCIATION



Broader Scholarly
Communication
Communities

